

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

1. (original) A method for reading a micro-discrete indicia on a gemstone, comprising the steps of:
locating said micro-discrete indicia on said gemstone; and
reading said micro-discrete indicia using near-field optics.
2. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said micro-discrete indicia is located initially located using an eye-loop and/or a microscope.
3. (currently amended) A method according to claim 1 [[2]] wherein said micro-discrete indicia is located by using predetermined coordinates associated with the indicia on ~~characteristics of~~ said gemstone.
4. (original) A method according to claim 3 where a document is provided that designates the appropriate coordinates of the micro-discrete indicia of said gemstone.
5. (original) A method according to claim 4 wherein said characteristics of said gemstone is selected from one of the following:
size, type of gemstone, facet, manufacturer, retailer, and/or owner.
6. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said micro-discrete indicia is used for authenticating an occasion of said gemstone.
7. (original) A method according to claim 6 wherein said authentication identifies the manufacturer, owner, retailer, quality, and/or type of gemstone.
8. (original) A method according to claim 1 wherein said locating of said indicia on said gemstone is provided by scanning said gemstone.